

LESSON 1

Meet the Longfellow Family 1843-1854

Main Objective

This lesson introduces students to the Longfellow family, and provides them with context for understanding the evolving personalities and characters of the unit's key figures (Henry and Charley Longfellow), and the importance of house and home in the lives of the Longfellow family members. Students examine a secondary source along with family photographs, journal entries, and letters to learn about the Longfellow family members and the beliefs and ideals that were important to the family. The use of primary sources to examine these individuals will encourage students to personalize their investigation the history of United States in the middle of the 19th Century (1840-1870).

Guiding Question

What can be learned about the Longfellow family and the relationship between Charley Longfellow and his father through secondary sources, first-hand accounts (journals and letters) and period images and objects that remain in the Longfellow House today?

Intended Learning Outcomes (Understandings)

By the close of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Identify key figures (Henry and Charley) and their defining character traits.
- Describe how those traits may impact their future relationship.

Intended Learning Outcomes (Skills)

By the close of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Develop a hypothesis based on evidence from a variety of primary sources.
- Imagine the impact of the differences in character and temperament between Henry and his oldest son Charley, and how this will evolve over time.

Curriculum Connections

History/Social Science

Learning Standards

USI.28 Explain the emergence and impact of the textile industry in New England and industrial growth generally throughout antebellum America.

B. the causes and impact of a wave of immigration from Northern Europe to America in the 1840s and 1850s

C. The rise of a business class of merchants and manufacturers

Concepts and Skills

8. Interpret the past within its own historical context rather than in terms of present-day norms and values.
10. Distinguish historical fact from opinion.

English Language Arts

Reading and Literature Strand

- 8: Understanding a Text. Students will identify the basic facts and main ideas of a text and use them as the basis for interpretation.
- 9: Making Connections. Students will deepen their understanding of a literary or non-literary text by relating it to its contemporary context or historical background.

Prior Knowledge

- Rise of the textile industry in New England that brought Longfellow wealth through his marriage to Fanny Appleton.
- The rise of an affluent middle class.
- Some experience reading poetry will be helpful.

Teacher Preparation

1. Review lesson plan
2. Ensure that students are familiar with content identified under “Prior Knowledge”
3. Review and introduce vocabulary to students
4. Copy Guiding Question and Primary Source packets for Teams A – D.
5. Post guiding questions for the lesson: “What can be learned about the Longfellow family and the relationship between Charley Longfellow and his father through secondary sources, first-hand accounts (journals and letters) and period images and objects that remain in the Longfellow House today?”

Time

Recommended allotment of time for this lesson is one 50-minute session:

Activity I: One 50-minute session

Challenging Vocabulary

Students may find some vocabulary in this lesson difficult, especially in Longfellow’s poems. Definitions are included for groups 3 and 4 in the Primary Source packets.

Group 3: banditti (outlaw belonging to a gang), moulder (decay).

Bishop of Bingen/Mouse-Tower on the Rhine- German folk tale of evil ruler devoured by mice in a stone tower on the Rhine River

Group 4: piazza (porch), chloroform (anesthetic), darksome (gloomy), besieging (attack by surrounding), denizen (resident), benison (blessing).

Hiawatha – Native American Hero and subject of an epic poem written by H.W. Longfellow in 1855.

Coromandel – the southeast coast of India

Acestes’ Shaft – mythological figure (Roman) that shot arrows so quickly that they caught fire in flight

Materials

For Teachers

- Lesson plan
- Guiding Questions and Primary Source packets for Teams A - D
- 'The People's Poet, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, (1807-1882)
- Facsimile of Longfellow House-Washington's Headquarters, Cambridge, MA - unit of the National Park Service

For students

Investigative Team A: Guiding Questions and Primary Source Packet #1
Cast of Characters: Investigation 1

Investigative Team B: Guiding Questions and Primary Source Packet #2
Cast of Characters: Investigation 1

Investigative Team C: Guiding Questions and Primary Source Packet #3
Cast of Characters: Investigation 1

Investigative Team D: Guiding Questions and Primary Source Packet #4
Cast of Characters: Investigation 1

Activities

I. Who are the Longfellow family members?

A. Introduction

1. Henry Longfellow, a prominent American poet and author in the middle of the 1800s, and his family provide an excellent lens to look at the changing ideas and historical events of the period. Henry Longfellow and his son Charley can be studied through their words and the objects they left behind to better understand this period of American history. This lesson uses primary and secondary sources to introduce the individuals that will populate the lessons that follow.
2. Divide the class into four Investigative Teams (A-D).

B. Research

Team A

Guiding Question: *Who is Henry Wadsworth Longfellow?*

Evidence:

1. What kind of document is this? How do you know? Why was the document written? Who wrote the document? For whom was it written?
2. What is the most important message? What is the relationship between the author and the audience? What does the document help us understand about the person we are studying?
3. What kind of “documents” are these images of Longfellow? What is the relationship between the “author” and the audience? What does each image help us understand about the person we are studying?
4. How does Henry Longfellow appear to his wife and son?

Team B

Guiding Question: *What do contemporary sources reveal about the Longfellow family?*

Evidence:

1. Why does Henry Longfellow select this house? Who lived in this house before the Longfellows and why is that important to Mr. Longfellow?
2. What can you learn by looking at the size of the house and how orderly the yard is kept? What do the pictures tell you about the values and social prominence of the Longfellow family?
3. List the servants that live in the house and use the information (ages, where they are from) to guess what jobs they might do for the Longfellow family.

Team C

Guiding Question: *What are the joys and challenges of parenting for Henry and Fanny Longfellow?*

Evidence:

1. How does Mr. Longfellow feel about being a parent?
2. How does Mrs. Longfellow feel about being a parent?
3. How does Fanny compare and contrast Charley and Erny?
4. What do family photos reveal about their subjects?

Team D

Guiding Question: *Who is Charley Longfellow?*

Evidence:

1. What does Henry Longfellow notice about his infant son and hope for Charley's future?
2. What happened to Charley in 1856? How do you think this changed his life?
3. What are Charley's strongest personality traits? How do you think they will impact his future and his relationship with his father?
4. What does Erny Longfellow say about having a famous father? How do you think Charley will deal with this?

C. Conclusion

1. When finished, each team gives a brief talk about their findings with respect to the Longfellow family. Each team should say what kinds of evidence they looked at and provide an answer their guiding question in the presentation:
Team A: *Who is Henry Wadsworth Longfellow??*
Team B: *What do contemporary sources reveal about the Longfellow family?*
Team C: *What are the joys and challenges of parenting for Henry and Fanny Longfellow?*
Team D: *Who is Charley Longfellow?*
2. Conclude the discussion by asking: *What can be learned about the Longfellow family and the relationship between Charley Longfellow and his father through secondary sources, first-hand accounts (journals and letters) and period images and objects that remain in the Longfellow House today?*



Longfellow House-Washington's Headquarters, Cambridge, MA
A unit of the National Park Service

The People's Poet

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

(1807-1882)



Wadsworth-Longfellow House
in Portland, Maine, c. 1887

Early Years

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was born in Portland, Maine on February 27, 1807. His mother, Zilpah Wadsworth Longfellow, was the daughter of Brigadier General Peleg Wadsworth who served with Paul Revere in the Revolution and later became a member of the Massachusetts Senate and Federal Congress. His father, Stephen, was a well known Portland lawyer who served in the Massachusetts State Legislature and United States Congress.

Second in a family of eight children, Henry was known for his lively imagination and a thirst for learning. At age five, his parents enrolled him in the Portland Academy, a private school attended by his older brother Stephen. School suited Henry, as this report from the school in 1816 indicates:

Master Henry Longfellow is one of the best boys we have in school. He spells and reads very well. He can also add and multiply numbers. His conduct last quarter was very correct and amiable.

When he turned fourteen, Longfellow passed the entrance exam for Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine. He enrolled the same year and by all accounts he loved studying there. Bowdoin offered many opportunities for Longfellow to pursue his literary interests, including a literary club which he was quick to join. At Bowdoin, Henry surrounded himself with people who shared and encouraged his interest in language and literature, and began to give serious thought to a career in literature.

Choosing a Career

Longfellow's father was less than enthusiastic about his son's desire to pursue a literary career. In a letter written in December 1824, Stephen Longfellow wrote to Henry:

The subject of your first letter is one of deep interest ... A literary life, to one who has the means of support, must be very pleasant... as you have not had the fortune...to be born rich, you must adopt a profession which will afford you subsistence as well as reputation...

Stephen Longfellow encouraged his son to pursue a career in law instead, but when Henry was in his senior year, the college established a chair of Modern Languages and asked him to become the first professor. He accepted the position—



Stephen Longfellow, 1824 (detail)
Maine Historical Society

viewing it as a way to make a profitable career out of his love of languages while satisfying his father's desire for him to be profitable. In order to prepare for the job, Bowdoin required Henry to travel and study in Europe before assuming the position.

In May of 1826, Longfellow set sail for Europe to turn himself into a scholar and a linguist. He had letters of introduction to scholars in England and France, but he had his own ideas on how to get the education he felt would serve his needs. Between meetings with important people and courses in the universities, Longfellow walked through the countryside. He stopped at small inns and cottages in Spain, Italy, France, Germany and England—talking to peasants, farmers, and traders, in addition to people of note. In 1829 he returned to Bowdoin to begin his career as a college professor. At 22, he was one of the college's youngest professors, and since Modern Languages was a new area of study, he prepared his own texts.



National Park Service

Henry Longfellow, 1840

Professor of Modern Languages

Longfellow was a colorful figure on campus. He was young, he wore bright clothing, and he intrigued students with the languages and literature of Spain, France, and Italy. In addition to teaching, Longfellow found time to translate Old World literature, write poetry, and submit travel articles for publication in well-read journals.

In 1831, he married Mary Storer Potter, and the two lived in Maine for several years until in 1834, Longfellow was offered a position as head of the Modern Language Department at Harvard College in Cambridge, Massachusetts. To prepare for the position, the Longfellows journeyed to Europe. While in the Netherlands, Mary suffered a miscarriage and died from complications in November 1835.

Devastated by his loss, Longfellow plunged into study and spent the following winter and spring in Heidelberg perfecting his German. He met the Appletons of Boston's fashionable Beacon Hill in 1836 while summering in Switzerland. Nathan Appleton was a prominent banker, manufacturer, and politician who made his fortune in the New England textile industry. Longfellow was captivated by Appleton's daughter, Frances Elizabeth (Fanny), but she did not immediately return his interest. The young professor left soon after for America and his duties at Harvard.



Cambridge Life

In Cambridge, Longfellow persuaded widow Elizabeth Craigie to accept him as a lodger at her comfortable home on Brattle Street. Craigie House suited Longfellow, providing a short walk to Harvard, views of the Charles River, and lush grounds to walk while pondering poetry and verse. His first literary writings were published within three years of moving to Cambridge: *Hyperion*, *A Romance*

(1839) and *Voices of the Night* (1839).

Courtship and Marriage

When the Appleton family returned to Boston, Henry and Fanny struck up a courtship, and on July 13, 1843, they married. Fanny's father purchased Craigie House later that year and presented the house and surrounding grounds to the Longfellow as a wedding gift. Within eleven months of their wedding, Fanny Longfellow gave birth to the first of their six children: Charles Appleton Longfellow. Charley's birth marked the start of a new kind of life at "Craigie Castle," a life filled with the sounds of children, staff, family pets, extended family, friends, guests, and strangers eager to catch a glimpse of the famed poet and his family. In this setting, Longfellow raised a family; entertained reformers, politicians, and literary figures; and wrote some of his most popular poems.



Charley & Erny Longfellow, c. 1849

Longfellow's Legacy

Longfellow lived the balance of his life at the old house on Brattle Street. From his study he drafted, revised, and ultimately penned hundreds of poems that captured people's imaginations, shaped the nation's understanding of itself, and gave rise to a distinctly American literary tradition. Poems like *Paul Revere's Ride*, *The Psalm of Life*, *The Children's Hour*, *The Village Blacksmith*, and *Hiawatha*—written more than a century ago—remain among the country's most popular poems.

In 1972, the Longfellow House Trust donated the house and property to the National Park Service to preserve for the benefit and inspiration of the citizens of the United States. Henry suspected that you and many others would someday be interested in his life, and he makes note of this in a reflective journal entry:



December 14, 1853

"How brief this chronicle is, even of my outward life. And of my inner life, not a word. If one were only sure that one's journal would never be seen by anyone, and never get into print, how different the case would be! But death picks the locks of all portfolios, and throws the contents into the street for the public to scramble for."

Charley Longfellow:
Coming of Age in a Time of Turbulence
AN HISTORIC HOUSE EXPLORERS PROGRAM

LESSON 1
Meet the Longfellow Family:

Cast of Characters

Principal Characters

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (b. 1807): [HWL] Henry Longfellow was a scholar and educator, translator, poet, compiler of anthologies, and husband to Frances Appleton Longfellow with whom he fathered six children. He was raised in Portland, Maine, and graduated from Bowdoin College in 1825. He was a professor of Modern Language at Bowdoin (1829-1835) and afterwards professor of French and Spanish literature at Harvard College. Longfellow was the first American poet to make substantial sums from his work, and at the turn of the 20th century, copies of his poems sold worldwide in excess of one million. During his lifetime, Longfellow was the most popular and widely read American poet in the world.

Frances Appleton Longfellow (b. 1817): [FAL] Daughter of Nathan Appleton, wife of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and mother to six Longfellow children. Fanny was raised in the fashionable Beacon Hill section of Boston, though the family traveled to Europe with some degree of regularity. Fanny married Henry Longfellow in July 1843, at which point the two set up home in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Fanny was an avid reader and writer, and appreciated the fine arts, theater, and music.

Charles Appleton Longfellow (b. 1844): [CAL] The first born of the Longfellow children. In an 1848 journal entry, his mother describes Charley as one who “promises to be the man of action.”

Supporting Characters

Appleton, Nathan (1779-1861): Fanny Appleton Longfellow’s father. Nathan Appleton was a member of the Boston Associates - a group of investors who financed the early Lowell textile manufacturing system. Nathan Appleton purchased the Brattle Street home for his daughter and her husband as a wedding present, and proceeded to finance their acquisition of furniture, carpets, and other textiles used in the house interior, as well as a stretch of land that connected the house to the Charles River.

Dana Jr, Richard Henry (1815-1882): Writer, lawyer, close friend and neighbor of Henry W. Longfellow, and father-in-law to Longfellow’s daughter Edith. After spending two years (1831–33) at Harvard, he shipped as a common sailor around Cape Horn to California. The narrative of this voyage, published as *Two Years before the Mast* (1840), was written to secure justice for the sailor and has become an American classic of the days of sailing ships. Dana graduated from Harvard in 1837 and entered law practice. Active in politics, he helped found the Free-Soil party and represented escaped slaves who became fugitives with passage of the Compromise of 1850 (Fugitive Slave Act).

Dolben, Richard: Gardener for the Longfellow family.

Dunn, Mary: Nurse or nanny for the Longfellow children from October 1846 – October 1850. She was born in Newfoundland, Canada.

Felton, Cornelius (1807-1862): Close friend of Henry Longfellow and frequent guest at the Longfellow House. Felton graduated from Harvard in 1827, served as professor of Greek (1832-1834), then assumed the Eliot Professor of Greek Literature (1834-1860). He was appointed president of Harvard College in 1860, a position he held for two years until his death on February 26, 1862.

Greenleaf, Mary Longfellow (1816-1902): Henry Longfellow's younger sister. Mary married cotton trader James Greenleaf and lived down the street from Henry and Fanny Longfellow half of the year, and in New Orleans the other half. Mary's husband, James, was described as a Copperhead by Sam Longfellow.

Longfellow, Alice M. (1850-1928): The Longfellows' second daughter.

Longfellow, Edith (1853-1915): The Longfellows' third daughter.

Longfellow, Ernest (1845-1921): The Longfellows' second son. In 1848 Fanny Longfellow described Erny as the one who "promises to be the poet."

Longfellow, Reverend Samuel (1819-1892): Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's youngest brother and biographer, Samuel was a Unitarian minister and author of many hymns still in use today. Sam believed in transcendentalism, temperance, and women's suffrage, and ardently opposed the institution of slavery. Sam lived with Henry and Fanny Longfellow while attending Harvard (1844-1846), and continued to live with the family on-and-off until his death in 1892.

Longfellow, Zilpah (1778-1851): Henry Longfellow's mother. Daughter of Brigadier General Peleg Wadsworth who served with Paul Revere in the Revolution and later became a member of the Massachusetts Senate and Federal Congress. Zilpah married Stephen Longfellow in 1804—two years after the death of her sister Eliza – Stephen's first fiancée. Zilpah Longfellow mothered six children. The home in which she raised her children is in Portland, Maine. Today, the house is a museum operated by the Maine Historical Society.

Mackintosh, Mary Appleton (1813-1889): Fanny Appleton's older sister. Mary lived in England with her husband, Robert, and their four children. She and Fanny communicated regularly about parenting, children, and family affairs.

Patten, Mary: Housekeeper and cook for the Longfellow family from September 1845 – October 1855.

Sumner, Charles (1811-1874): Henry Longfellow's closest friend, frequent houseguest, and faithful confidante. Sumner was a politician and statesman from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. A noted lawyer and orator, Sumner devoted his enormous energies to the destruction of what he considered the "Slave Power"—the conspiracy of slave owners to seize control of the federal government and block the progress of liberty. He served in the U.S. Senate for 23 years, from 1851 to his death, during which time fought to repeal the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act, denounced the Kansas-Nebraska Act which paved the way for slavery to be extended into the new territories, and gave numerous speeches on the evils of slavery and the danger of growing sectionalism. On May 22, 1856, Sumner was attacked and beaten into unconsciousness in his Senate chamber by South Carolina congressman Preston Brooks for comments made about Brooks' uncle during a speech given two days earlier. Sumner, who suffered from severe head trauma and post traumatic shock, did not attend the Senate for three years, though he continued to serve as Senator from Massachusetts until his death on March 11, 1874.

Wadsworth, Emmeline Austin: Fanny Longfellow's best friend; moved to Geneseo, New York following her marriage to William Wadsworth.

Whittier, John Greenleaf (1807-1892): Poet, abolitionist, and friend of Henry W. Longfellow, Whittier was devoted to social causes and reform, and worked passionately for a series of abolitionist newspapers and magazines in the years leading up to the Civil War. Whittier founded the antislavery Liberty party in 1840 and ran unsuccessfully for Congress in 1842.

LESSON 1:
Meet the Longfellow Family
1843-1854

GUIDING QUESTION #1

Guiding Question: Who is Henry Wadsworth Longfellow?

Supporting Questions

1. What kind of document is it? How do you know? Why was the document written? Who wrote the document? For whom was it written?

☐ The People's Poet, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, (1807-1882)

2. What is the most important message? What is the relationship between the author and the audience? What does the document help us understand about the person we are studying?

☐ The People's Poet, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, (1807-1882)

3. What kind of "documents" are these images of Longfellow? What is the relationship between the "author" and the audience? What does each image help us understand about the person we are studying?

- ☐ Deugerrotype: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1850
- ☐ Portrait: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, by Laurence, 1852

4. How does Henry Longfellow appear to his wife and son?

- ☐ JOURNAL: Fanny A. Longfellow – May 28, 1848
- ☐ BOOK: *Random Memories* by Ernest Longfellow published 1922

LESSON 1:
Meet the Longfellow Family
1843-1854

PRIMARY SOURCE PACKET #1

Guiding Question: Who is Henry Wadsworth Longfellow?

Use with “The People’s Poet” handout.

FANNY A. LONGFELLOW JOURNAL

May 28, 1848

Henry took his sunset row on the river. Sat at window & followed the flashing of his oars with my eyes & heart. He rowed around one bend of the river, then another, now under the shadow of the woods & now in the golden sun-light. Longed to be with him & grew impatient for wings he looked so far away. How completely my life is bound up in this love, how broken & incomplete when he is absent a moment; what infinite peace & fullness when he is present. And he loves me to the uttermost desire of my heart.

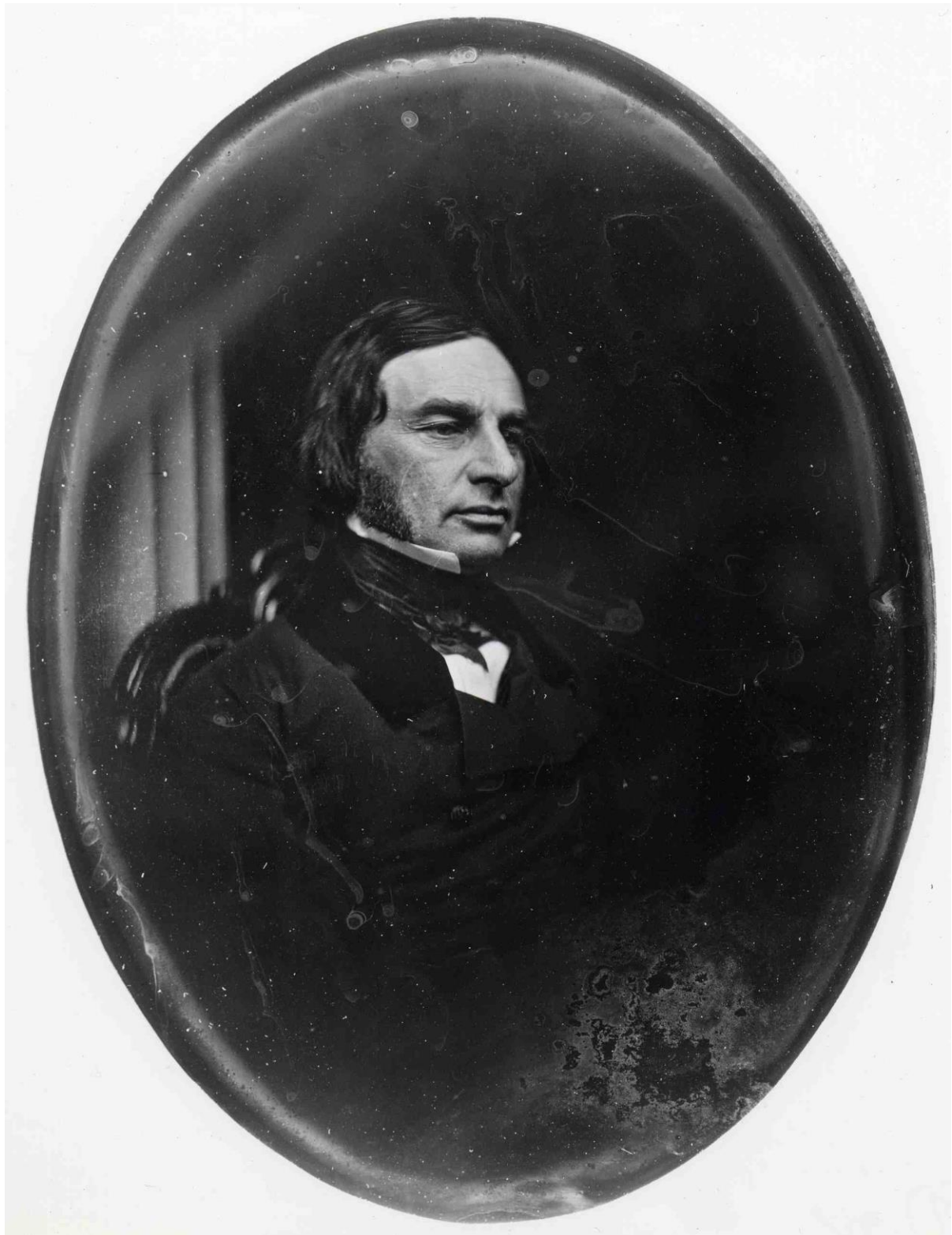
RANDOM MEMORIES BY ERNEST LONGFELLOW

Published 1922

My father, as I first remember him, was a man somewhat over forty: clean-shaven except for small mutton-chop side whiskers, turning grey; hair rather long parted in the middle behind, and brought forward over the ears in what would now be considered a rather touseled condition, but was the fashion of that time. He had a rather large mouth, but finely cut, a slightly aquiline nose, broad and fine forehead, and beautiful blue eyes. His whole expression was benign and sweet, and did not belie his character, which was the most perfect imaginable. He had a well-set-up figure of middle height, with square shoulders, and a jauntiness in his walk and bearing ... In the days when professors and even other men in Boston and Cambridge were rather slovenly in their appearance, he was always carefully dressed, and indeed was considered rather a dandy...

My father was very methodical and careful in his ways. He believed in having a place for everything and everything in its place, and kept with the greatest care anything that could be useful....

That was very characteristic of my father; he always thought it was best not to do a thing. He had none of the adventurous spirit. “To stay at home is best,” he wrote.



Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, daguerreotype 1850



Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, by Laurence, 1852

LESSON 1:
Meet the Longfellow Family
1843-1854

GUIDING QUESTION #2

Guiding Question: What do contemporary sources reveal about the Longfellow family?

Supporting Questions

1. Why does Henry Longfellow select this house? Who lived in this house before the Longfellows and why is that important to Mr. Longfellow?

☐ LETTERS: Henry Longfellow to Stephen Longfellow, 1843

2. Look at these pictures of the house. What can you learn by looking at the size of the house and how orderly the yard is kept? What do the pictures tell you about the values and social prominence of the Longfellow family?

- ☐ ARTWORK: Vautin watercolor of the Longfellow House, 1845
- ☐ PHOTO: Front of the Longfellow House 1860s
- ☐ BOOK: *Random Memories* by Ernest Longfellow published 1922

3. Use the census records to find who lived in the house in 1850. List the servants that live in the house and use the information (ages, where they are from) to guess what jobs they might do for the Longfellow family. Hint: the Cast of Characters can help with a few names.

- ☐ PHOTO: 1850 Census Book (transcript)

LESSON 1:
Meet the Longfellow Family
1843-1854

PRIMARY SOURCE PACKET #2

Guiding Question: What do primary sources reveal about the Longfellow family?

LETTERS

Henry Longfellow to Stephen Longfellow, 1843

We have purchased a mansion here, built before the Revolution, and occupied by Washington as his headquarters when the American army was at Cambridge. It is a fine old house and I have a strong attachment from having lived in it since I first came to Cambridge. With it are five acres of land. The Charles River winds through the meadows in front and in the rear I yesterday planted an avenue of linden trees, which already begin to be ten or twelve feet high. I have also planted some acorns and the oaks grow for a thousand years, you may imagine a whole line of little Longfellows...walking under their branches for countless generations...all blessing the men who planted the oaks.

RANDOM MEMORIES BY ERNEST LONGFELLOW

Published 1922

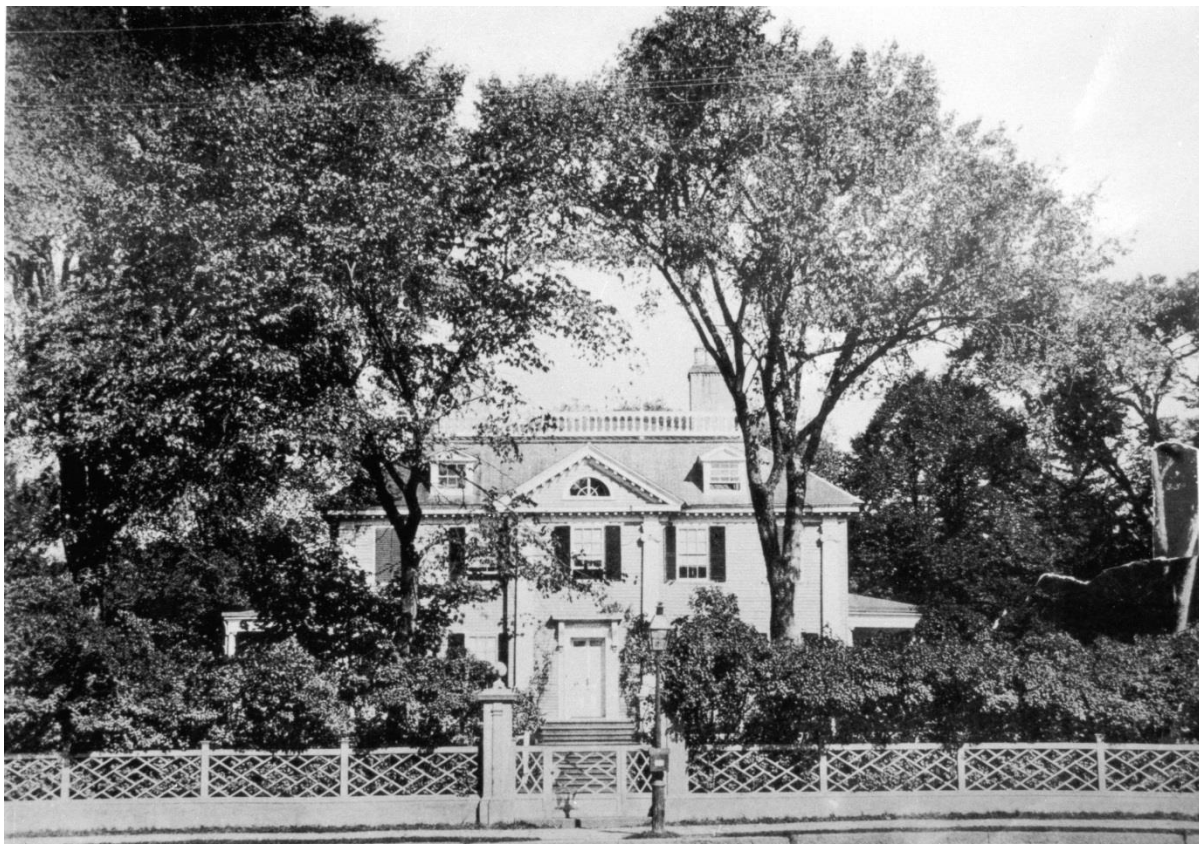
My father and mother had six children in all: my brother Charles who was born within a year of their marriage and was a year and a half my senior; a sister, who was born two or three years after me, but lived only a short time; and my three sisters...



Longfellow House, 1862



Vautin Watercolor, 1845



Front of the Longfellow House 1860s



1850 Census, Longfellow excerpt (transcription below)

Schedule I. – Free Inhabitants in Cambridge in the County of Middlesex State of Massachusetts enumerated by me, on the 17th day of September 1850. S[] C. Bigelow Ass't Marshal.											
Dwelling-houses numbered in the order of	Families numbered in the order of visitation.	The Name of every Person whose usual place of abode on the first day of June, 1850, was in this family.	Age.	Sex.	Color. { White, black	Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each Male Person over 15 years of age.	Value of Real Estate owned.	Place of Birth. Naming the State, Territory, or Country.	Married within the year.	Attended School within the year.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict.
2027	2476	Henry W. Longfellow	43	M		Prof. Harvard College	30,000	Me.			
		Fanny E. "	33	F				Mass			
		Charley A. "	6	M				"			
		Ernest W. "	5	M				"			
2027	2476	Mary Dunn	29	F				Newfoundland		/	
		Mary Patten	58	F				Ireland		/	
		Ellen F. May	24	F				Mass			
		John Meares	56	M		Labourer		Ireland			

LESSON 1:
Meet the Longfellow Family
1843-1854

GUIDING QUESTION #3

*Guiding Question: What are the joys
and challenges of parenting for Henry and Fanny Longfellow?*

1. How does Mr. Longfellow feel about being a parent?
 - ☐ BOOK: *Random Memories* by Ernest Longfellow published 1922
 - ☐ JOURNAL: Henry Longfellow – June 10, 1844
 - ☐ POEM: The Children’s Hour, September 1860

Helpful vocabulary:

banditti -outlaw belonging to a gang

moulder -decay

Bishop of Bingen/Mouse-Tower on the Rhine -German folk tale of evil ruler devoured by mice in a stone tower on the Rhine River

2. How does Mrs. Longfellow feel about being a parent?
 - ☐ JOURNAL: Fanny Longfellow – July 13, 1844
 - ☐ PHOTO: Baby rattle used by Charley Longfellow

3. Read Fanny's 1849 journal entry. How does Fanny compare and contrast Charley and Erny?
- ☐ JOURNAL: Fanny Longfellow – January 5, 1849

4. What do family photos reveal about their subjects?
- ☐ PHOTO: Henry, Charley, Fanny and Erny Longfellow, August 1849
 - ☐ PHOTO: Charley, Fanny and Erny Longfellow, August 1849

LESSON 1:
Meet the Longfellow Family
1843-1854

PRIMARY SOURCE PACKET #3

*Guiding Question: What are the joys
and challenges of parenting for Henry and Fanny Longfellow?*

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW JOURNAL

June 10, 1844

Mother and child both well, and my heart as light as a feather. This having a baby is like dropping an anchor into the dark, deep waters of Eternity; as like throwing a ball of threads of many colors into the air, holding one end in your hand and letting it unroll itself to infinity. Thank God my dearest Fanny is so well. Felton and Sumner dined with me, and we drank his health in champagne.

FANNY LONGFELLOW JOURNAL

July 13, 1844

The anniversary of our wedding day. Celebrated it right joyfully by my first drive abroad with baby. Henry, nurse & Tom & our first dinner in the dining room. Hillard joined us. Charles provided a handsome bouquet & resurrected for the occasion some of our wedding cake whose existence I knew not of. What a year this day completed! What a golden chain of months & days, & with this diamond clasp born a month ago! I wonder if these old walls ever looked upon happier faces or thro' them down into happier hearts. With this day my journal ends, for I have now a living one to keep faithfully more faithfully than this.

January 5, 1849

Children still hoarse. Charley very cross and violent, had finally to be punished by his papa. It breaks my heart to see these demonstrations of temper, thinking what pain it will give him in after life, but he has a very tender conscience & a very loving nature & is as angry with himself as with others, so I trust it will be easily subdued. It is chiefly imitation, too, of the older boys he has seen. He thinks it manly to repeat their saucy phrases. He has no sulkiness fortunately – a flash & all is over. Little Ernie flies, like the dove of peace, to comfort me when Charley strikes me – he is an angelic little child, so gentle & good always. He sits in his small rocking chair at my side as demure as an old woman.

RANDOM MEMORIES BY ERNEST LONGFELLOW

Published 1922

My father and mother had six children in all: my brother Charles who was born within a year of their marriage and was a year and a half my senior; a sister, who was born two or three years after me, but lived only a short time; and my three sisters who figure in the “Children’s Hour” ...



Henry, Charley, Fanny and Erny Longfellow, August 1849



Baby rattle used by Charley Longfellow



Charley, Fanny and Erny Longfellow, August 1849

The Children's Hour

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1859

Between the dark and the daylight,
 When the night is beginning to lower,
 Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
 That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear the chamber above me
 The patter of little feet,
 The sound of a door that is opened,
 And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,
 Descending the broad hall stair,
 Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
 And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence:
 Yet I know by their merry eyes
 They are plotting and planning together
 To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
 A sudden raid from the hall!
 By three doors left unguarded
 They enter my castle wall!

They climb up into my turret
 O'er the arms and back of my chair;
 If I try to escape, they surround me;
 They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,
 Their arms about me entwine,
 Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen
 In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine!

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,
 Because you have scaled the wall,
 Such an old mustache as I am
 Is not a match for you all!
 I have you fast in my fortress,
 And will not let you depart,
 But put you down into the dungeon
 In the round-tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you forever,
 Yes, forever and a day,
 Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
 And moulder in dust away

LESSON 1:
Meet the Longfellow Family
1843-1854

GUIDING QUESTION #4

Guiding Question: Who is Charley Longfellow?

Supporting Questions

1. What does Henry Longfellow notice about his infant son and hope for Charley's future?

☐ POEM: To a Child, Henry Longfellow – 1845

Helpful vocabulary:

piazza -porch

chloroform -anesthetic

darksome -gloomy

besieging - attack by surrounding

denizen -resident

benison -blessing

Hiawatha – Native American hero and subject of an epic poem written by H.W. Longfellow in 1855.

Coromandel – the southeast coast of India

Acestes' Shaft – mythological figure (Roman) that shot arrows so quickly that they caught fire in flight

2. What happened to Charley in 1856? How do you think this changed his life?

- ☐ JOURNAL: Henry Longfellow – April 10-16, 1856
- ☐ JOURNAL: Fanny Longfellow – Chronicles of the Children of Craigie, 1856

3. What are Charley's strongest personality traits? How do you think they will impact his future and his relationship with his father?

- ☐ JOURNAL: Henry Longfellow – June 19, 1846
- ☐ JOURNAL: Fanny Longfellow - April 19, 1848
- ☐ JOURNAL: Fanny Longfellow – Chronicles of the Children of Craigie, 1856
- ☐ JOURNAL: Henry Longfellow – June 9, 1858

4. What does Erny Longfellow say about having a famous father? How do you think Charley will deal with this?

- ☐ PHOTO: Charles Appleton Longfellow, 1854
- ☐ BOOK: *Random Memories* by Ernest Longfellow published 1922

LESSON 1:
Meet the Longfellow Family
1843-1854

PRIMARY SOURCE PACKET #4

Guiding Question: Who is young Charley Longfellow?

FANNY A. LONGFELLOW JOURNAL

April 19, 1848

... C[harley] out in front on the piazza sweeping away the snow with a broom doing it very skillfully. He is a very handy, quick witted boy with a great capacity for work for one not yet four years old.

Chronicles of the Children of Craigie 1856

Alice and Ernie say Sunday lessons to me very well, but Charley is still rebellious, but a manly good-hearted boy one must love...

Chronicles of the Children of Craigie 1856

This year was a cruel one to us & to poor Charley, who, having rashly bought a poor gun & probably trying too heavy a charge, it burst & carried away the thumb of his left hand. He was at Fresh Pond, with an older boy, who bravely bound up his hand, brought him home & in for the surgeon. Charley bore it like a little hero & feels it less than we do. As soon as he could speak after the operations & chloroform, he said seeing me crying by his bed-side, "Don't worry mamma, kiss me, it don't hurt much.

HENRY W LONGFELLOW JOURNAL

June 19, 1846

I had my darling Charley out walking. He always aims for the street and the largest freedom. He is already fond of hearing stories, though he will not allow them to be read from a book. Improvised they must be, and instantly or he begins to kick.

April 10, 1856

A dreadful accident happened to Charley to-day. The bursting of a gun has shockingly mangled his left hand. The thumb is entirely gone. Thank heaven it is no worse. It is awful enough as it is, and I do not dare to think of it, though my imagination runs forward through his whole life. He was at Fresh Pond with a larger boy, who had the presence of mind to tie a cord tightly round his wrist; and so he walked homeward, a mile or more, with his dreadful wound. He bears it like a hero. Poor little fellow! He does not feel what it is to be maimed for life.

April 11, 1856

Charley had a good night, and Doctors say this morning, that all looks as well as possible. Dr. Hayward come out to consult with Wyman, and gives good report. Dana calls.

April 13, 1856

No unfavorable symptoms yet; but some pain, and restlessness. Poor boy! But is lucky it is no worse – the right hand, for instance or the face – or the eyes. We cannot be too grateful for this. But it is very sad. Charley behaves very well; and is more patient than I could have thought it possible for him to be. Felton calls in the afternoon, with Mr. Flower, a pleasant young Englishman from Stratford-on-Avon.

April 14, 1856

I cut this from the Transcript. It is all wrong. The gun was not a toy-gun, and the older boy did not persuade Charley to load it.

Accident at Cambridge. Son of Mr. Longfellow, about ten years of age, was playing yesterday with a toy gun, intended to be used only to fire percussion caps with: another boy persuaded him to put in a charge of powder; the gun barrel burst and shattered his left hand terrible. The little fellow would have done wisely to go to the story teller, who

Made a bow of Hiawatha;
 From a branch of ash he made it,
 From an oak-bough made the arrows,
 Tipped with flint and winged with feathers
 And the cord he made with deer-skin.

Certainly nothing can be more dangerous than the every day practice of allowing children to play with powder fire-arms.

April 15, 1856

The boy, Wm Gibson, who was with Charley came to see me, and is troubled by the paragraph in the Transcript, I exonerate him from all blame. After the accident he behaved with great presence of mind; tied the cord of the powder-flank round Charley's wrist; came home with him and ran from the surgeon. Charley is getting on very well.

April 16, 1856

This has been a wretched week, of anxious days and sleepless nights, both to Fanny and myself. But I think the worst of it is over, so far as suffering goes. But alas! this life-long mutilation remains.

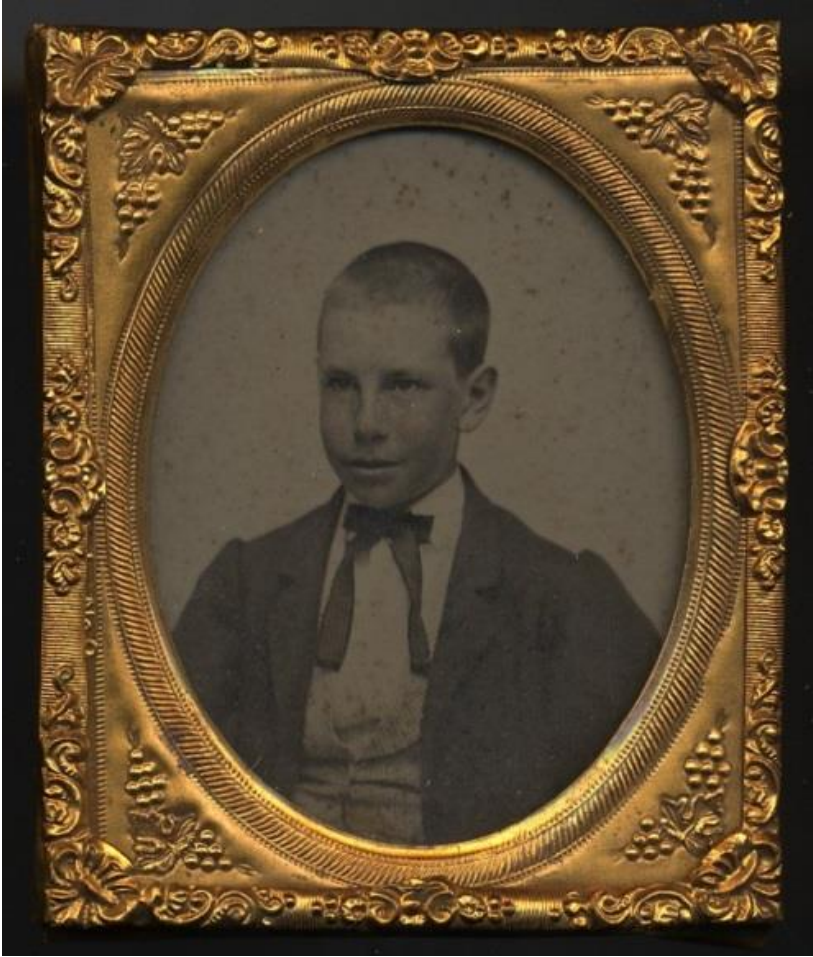
June 9, 1858

Charley's birthday. He is fourteen years old: active, impetuous, skilful in all out of door sports, not a lover of school books and with a strong will of his own.

RANDOM MEMORIES BY ERNEST LONGFELLOW

Published 1922

...Any one who has had the misfortune to be the son of an illustrious parent knows how hard it is to be taken seriously by people. He remains, with them, always the son of his father. They generally try to make matters better by reminding him that it is a well-known fact that genius skips one generation.



Charles Appleton Longfellow, 1854

To A Child (excerpted)

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1845

...With what a look of proud command
 Thou shakest in thy little hand
 The coral rattle with its silver bells,
 Making a merry tune!
 Thousands of years in Indian seas
 That coral grew, by slow degrees,
 Until some deadly and wild monsoon
 Dashed it on Coromandel's sand!
 Those silver bells
 Reposed of yore,
 As shapeless ore,
 Far down in the deep-sunken wells
 Of darksome mines...

But, lo! Thy door is left ajar!
 Though hearest footsteps from afar!
 And, at the sound,
 Though turnest round
 With quick and questioning eyes,
 Like one, who, in a foreign land,
 Beholds on every hand
 Some source of wonder and surprise!
 And, restlessly, impatiently,
 Thou strivest, strugglest, to be free.

The four walls of thy nursery
 Are now like prison walls to thee.
 No more thy mother's smiles,
 No more the painted tiles,
 Delight thee, nor the playthings on the floor,
 That won thy little, beating heart before;
 Thou strugglest for the open door.

...Once, ah, once, within these walls,
 One whom memory oft recalls,
 The Father of this Country, dwelt.
 And yonder meadows broad and damp
 The fires of the besieging camp
 Encircled with a burning belt.
 Up and down these echoing stairs,
 Heavy with the weight of cares,
 Sounded his majestic tread;

Yes, within this very room
 Sat he in those hours of gloom,
 Weary both in heart and head.
 ...

But what are these grave thoughts to thee?
 Out, out! into the open air!
 Thy only dream is liberty,
 Thou carest little how or where.
 I see thee eager at thy play,
 Now shouting to the apples on the tree,
 With cheeks as round and red as they;
 And now among the yellow stalks,
 Among the flowering shrubs and plants,
 As restless as the bee.
 Along the garden walks,

O Child! O new-born denizen
 Of life's great city! on thy head
 The glory of the morn is shed,
 Like a celestial benison!
 Here at the portal thou dost stand,
 And with thy little hand
 Thou openest the mysterious gate
 Into the future's undiscovered land.
 I see its valves expand
 As at the touch of Fate!

... Enough! I will not play the Seer;
 I will no longer strive to ope
 The mystic volume, where appear
 The herald Hope, forerunning Fear,
 And Fear, the pursuivant of Hope.
 Thy destiny remains untold;
 For, like Acastes' shaft of old,
 The swift thought kindles as it flies,
 And burns to ashes in the skies.